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MESSAGE

OF

GOV. J. PROCTOR KNOTT

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF KENTUCKY,

AT THE

REGULAR SESSION, DECEMBER 31, 1883.

FRANKFORT, KY.:
PRINTED AT THE KENTUCKY YEOMAN OFFICE.
S. I. M. MAJOR, PUBLIC PRINTER.
1883.

Kentucky. Governor

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PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF KENTUCKY.

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GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

It is a source of extreme gratification to me that, in complying with the requirement of the Constitution which makes it my duty to communicate to you such information as I may have in relation to "the state of the Commonwealth," I am able to congratulate you upon the prosperity which it has pleased the Great Giver of all Good to vouchsafe to us during the two years which have elapsed since the last meeting of the General Assembly. Our homes have been free from the horrors of pestilence, and our households gladdened by the blessings of plenty; our fields have been crowned with bountiful harvests, and our products have found ready and remunerative markets; capital has been profitably employed, and labor fairly rewarded; our resources have been greatly developed, and our commerce largely increased; money has been abundant, and private indebtedness among our people comparatively small; nearly a hundred and fifty miles have been added to our railways, and the products of our mines increased over two hundred and fifty per cent.; while our official statistics for the last fiscal year show by far the largest production of our various agricultural staples since 1877, and in some of them an increase upon the yield of even that exceptionally prolific year.

Notwithstanding these gratifying evidences of an extraordinary popular prosperity, however, there has been but little change, and certainly no improvement, in the condition of our State finances during the period to which I have referred. At the close of the fiscal year ending October 10, 1881, there was in the Treasury to the credit of the Revenue Proper, and available for the ordinary expenditures of the State Government, a balance of $51,118.28; but as the loan of $300,000, which had been negotiated under the provisions of the act of 1880, in order to meet a previous deficiency, had not been paid, there was really a deficit at that time of $248,881.72.

Assuming the receipts and expenditures of that year as the basis of his calculation, our able and efficient Auditor of Public Accounts reached the conclusion stated in his admirable report to the last General Assembly, that at the close of the fiscal year ending October 10, 1883, the condition of the Treasury would be virtually the same as it then

was, and but for certain extraordinary circumstances which subsequently transpired, and which no human sagacity could foresee, his estimate would have proven substantially correct.

The fiscal year having been changed by law so as to begin on the first day of July, and the increased expenses unavoidably incident to a session of the Legislature having rendered it necessary to effect an additional loan of $200,000, the condition of the fund available for general expenditures from October 11, 1881, to June 30, 1882, and from July 1, 1882, to June 30, 1883, was as follows:

Balance in the Treasury October 10, 1881	$51,118 28
Receipts, including bank loan of $200,000	1,251,199 97
Total receipts and balance as above	$1,302,318 25
Disbursements deducted	1,254,253 28
Left a balance of	$48,064 97
Borrowed from bank as above	$200,000 00
Balance in the Treasury deducted	48,064 97
Shows deficit for the year	$151,935 03
Due banks prior to October 10, 1881	300,000 00
Total deficit June 30, 1882	$451,935 03
Balance in the Treasury June 30, 1882	$48,064 97
Receipts	1,622,328 30
Total receipts and balance on hand	$1,670,393 27
Disbursements deducted	1,661,768 94
Balance June 30, 1883	$8,624 33
Due banks June 30, 1883	$500,000 00
Less balance in Treasury	8,624 33
Actual deficit	$491,375 67

From this it will be seen that at the close of the last fiscal year there was in the Treasury to the credit of the Revenue Proper a balance of only $8,624.33 as against $48,064.97 at the end of the year preceding, while there was a total deficit of $491,375.67 instead of about $250,000, as was expected. Since the close of the fiscal year, however, this deficit has been diminished by $100,000 paid upon the bank loans; and it should also be observed that the estimated expenditures for the year

were exceeded about $50,000 on account of extraordinary expenses incurred in military operations, and nearly $65,000 devoted to our public charities in excess of similar expenditures for the year 1881, while of the estimated revenues over $55,000 have been withheld by the various railroad companies pending the litigation concerning the taxes assessed against them, recently determined in the Court of Appeals. Had this sum been paid into the Treasury, and the extraordinary expenditures above referred to not been incurred, the deficit on the 10th of October, deducting the $100,000 which have been paid on the bank loan since the first of July last, would have been really less than that estimated by the Auditor two years ago.

Nevertheless the fact remains that we are indebted to the banks to-day in the sum of $400,000, and there is no prospect of its being extinguished or materially diminished for years with the present resources of the Treasury, which are barely sufficient to enable us, after defraying the other necessary expenses of the Government, to accumulate every two years an average balance about equal to the additional expenditures incident to a single session of the General Assembly. This conclusion is rendered strikingly apparent by the following estimates of receipts and expenditures submitted by the Auditor of Public Accounts for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1884, and June 30, 1885:

Estimated receipts for the year ending June 30, 1884	$1,438,684 20
Balance in the Treasury June 30, 1883	8,624 33
Total resources for general expenditures during the year	$1,447,308 53
Estimated expenditures for the year deducted	1,425,300 00
Estimated balance in the Treasury June 30, 1884	$22,008 53
Amount due banks	$500,000 00
Deduct balance as above	22,008 53
Deficit in Treasury June 30, 1884	$477,991 47
Estimated receipts for year ending June 30, 1885	$1,450,000 00
Deduct estimated expenditures	1,270,300 00
Balance in the Treasury June 30, 1885	$179,700 00
Deficit June 30, 1884	$477,991 47
Deduct balance in the Treasury June 30, 1885	179,700 00
Gives deficit for June 30, 1885	$298,291 47

It is true that the payment of $100,000, which has since been made upon the bank debt, was not considered in the estimates just referred to; nor would the results have been materially changed if it had been, as it is probable that, unless some other provision shall be made by the present Legislature, it will be necessary to borrow again such sums as have been, or may be, paid the banks from time to time, as the exigencies of the Treasury may demand, especially if there should be any considerable failure in the revenue, or any extraordinary expenditures, as was the case during the last fiscal year. Such contingencies, indeed, may very largely increase the deficits anticipated in the foregoing estimates, in which event it would be impossible to seek even temporary relief in loans beyond the amount authorized by the act of 1880, as such an expedient is expressly inhibited by the provision of the Constitution, which limits the amount of all debts which may be created to meet casual deficits or failures in the revenue, whether direct or contingent, singly or in the aggregate, to five hundred thousand dollars.

It is fortunate for us, perhaps, that such a prohibition is to be found in our organic law. Communities as well as individuals are always more prosperous when their business transactions are conducted on a cash basis, and it is always bad economy to incur a debt without providing the means for its speediest possible extinguishment. A private borrower may, by judicious management of the borrowed capital, realize a profit in excess of the interest he pays upon the loan, but a debt created by a Commonwealth like ours, merely to meet deficiencies in its ordinary revenues, soon becomes an eating ulcer upon the body-politic—an insidious agency, silently but constantly sapping the resources of the tax-payer without conferring upon him any correlative benefit whatever. I trust, therefore, that you will honor yourselves and render the Commonwealth a most valuable service by adopting such measures as will speedily relieve its people from the burden of an unnecessary debt, and its Treasury from the stigma of an annually recurring deficit.

That our finances should present such an unenviable spectacle is as inexcusable as it is humiliating. The want of sufficient funds in the Treasury to meet all demands against it cannot be attributed to any indisposition on the part of our people to pay the taxes assessed against them, nor to any lack of diligence or fidelity in those who are charged with their collection. The Sheriffs throughout the State have, for several years, exhibited a most commendable promptness in returning the revenues with which they have been charged, and the unusual thorough-

ness of their collections, abundantly attest the willingness as well as the ability of the people to pay their respective assessments. Nor is it because the ordinary expenditures of the Government are or have been at all disproportionate to the wealth or the population of the State, for they have for years scarcely averaged a million and a half dollars per annum, or about 25 cents on each hundred dollars of taxable property in the Commonwealth—assessed at perhaps little over one half its actual value—and less than ninety cents *per capita*, while more than twenty-five per cent. of the amounts thus annually expended has been appropriated to the support of our public charities.

The difficulty has been and is still to be found, to a great extent, in our grossly defective system of assessment, rendered still more inefficient by the negligent and unsatisfactory manner in which it is administered. The mere fact that the entire valuation of all descriptions of taxable property within the Commonwealth for the last fiscal year amounted to but little over $374,500,000 is sufficient to satisfy any intelligent mind at all conversant with the subject that there must have been the grossest disparity between its market and assessed value. Our real property alone is worth double that sum. It has been estimated, indeed, that even in the centers of our wealth and population, where property is appraised at higher rates in order to raise large sums by taxation for local municipal purposes, it is rarely, if ever, assessed at over sixty per cent. of its real value, while in more sparsely populated localities the assessments do not reach forty per cent. My attention has been called to an instance in which the County Judge of a wealthy and populous county, by way of satire, no doubt, upon the manner in which property is valued for taxation in our State, insisted that money even should be assessed at only sixty cents on the dollar!

Nor is this all. Assessments are not only greatly disproportioned everywhere to the actual value of the property assessed, but there is no uniformity in them either as between classes or localities. It is not astonishing perhaps that the property of a person in moderate circumstances is almost certain to be more fully assessed than that of his wealthier neighbor, and that, too, without any intentional partiality on the part of the Assessor; for all he has is easily remembered or readily ascertained, while he who estimates his wealth by the hundred thousand is frequently liable to forget many articles which are subject to taxation, and where the valuation is left to himself, as is very often the case, he is apt to conclude that property is worth a great deal more for use than

it is for taxation, and therefore have it assessed at the lowest possible figure. It will be surprising to some, however, that the average value of horses in Boyd county should be over fifty-five dollars, while it is but little over forty in Bourbon! Or that mules should be assessed at sixty-seven dollars in Whitley, and only fifty-one in Woodford! Or that cattle should be worth eight dollars and thirty-four cents in Henderson, and only one dollar and fifty-four cents in the adjoining county of Hopkins!

These examples, taken at random from the official tables, and more on account of their juxtaposition of name than for any other reason, serve to illustrate not only the the want of uniformity, but the general inadequacy of valuations under our present system; and I am satisfied, after a thorough and careful study of the data furnished by the Auditor in the excellent report which he will lay before you, that, with anything like a just and reasonable assessment of the taxable property within the State, we would be able in a short time to extinguish the debt due the banks, and at the same time meet all the legitimate expenses of the Government, and that at a greatly reduced rate of taxation.

Inequalities and undervaluation in the assessment of the property subject to taxation are, however, by no means the only evils in our revenue system which demand your attention. As was suggested by the Auditor of Public Accounts in his report two years ago, much of our revenue is annually lost through exonerations, delinquent lists, and sales of lands for taxes, though the latter evils have been lessening from year to year, and may possibly reach their minimum under a rigid enforcement of our present statutes. Besides this, large amounts of property have from time to time been exempted from taxation by private acts of the Legislature, which should be restored to the tax-list by the prompt repeal of all such statutes. There are also various lottery companies plying their business in our State, and claiming to exercise their privileges under the sanction of our laws, who yet pay not a doit into the Treasury. They are said to be reaping enormous incomes from a class of our people who can ill afford to feed their cupidity—the servant girl who would increase her slender hoard for loved ones beyond the sea, and the day laborer who is induced to invest his meager wages in the illusive chance of winning a glittering prize. If they are permitted by law to prey upon the ignorant and the humble, they should be compelled by law to contribute to "the general coffer of the State." If they have a legal existence, they should be taxed; if they have not, they should be promptly suppressed.

On the other hand, there are many expenditures, involving a large amount of money in the aggregate, devolved upon the Commonwealth which, in simple justice, should be borne by the counties in which they are respectively incurred. Their payment out of the State Treasury is not only an injustice to the tax-payers of other localities, but stimulates extravagance, and leads to frauds upon the common revenues, which are all the more difficult to detect or prevent on account of the remoteness of the accounting officers of the Government from the *situs* of the transaction.

Again: there are numerous instances in which, under the guise of amendments to the charters of cities and towns, certain officers have been allowed by statute to charge twice the fees in criminal proceedings which are allowed by law to other officers for similar services, thus draining the Treasury annually of thousands of dollars in mere gratuities to a favored few.

In view of these facts, I would most earnestly recommend a thorough revision of our entire revenue system, so as to insure, as far as possible, a uniform and fair assessment of all the taxable property in the State, which shall be just alike to all portions of the Commonwealth and all classes of the community; the suppression of unjust exonerations; the prevention of unnecessary delinquencies, and the prompt collection of the revenues; the relegation to the various counties of all expenses which should be properly borne by them; a uniform scale of compensation to all public officers, of whatever grade or locality, for the performance of similar services, and the more certain and rigorous punishment of all frauds upon the Public Treasury.

I am aware that such a revision, to be at all complete or beneficial, will require great care and deliberation, as well as a laborious investigation of the various systems which have been adopted by other States; and if the magnitude of the work, or a want of sufficient time, shall prevent its accomplishment during your present session, I would concur most heartily in the suggestion urged by the Auditor so cogently two years ago, and repeated in his excellent report to the present Legislature, that measures should be taken to have the proposed revision thoroughly prepared and ready for submission at the next meeting of the General Assembly. Whether this can be most satisfactorily accomplished by a Legislative Committee, or a Special Commission created for the purpose, or by the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, is of course for your wisdom to determine. I insist, however, that whatever

course you may deem it wisest to pursue with regard to this matter, provision should be made during your present session for the earliest practicable extinguishment of our bank debt, and for that purpose I would recommend a temporary addition to our existing rate of taxation of 2½ cents on the hundred dollars, which I think would be sufficient to accomplish it within the next two years, even upon the basis of the present ridiculously low valuation of our taxable property, provided those classes of expenditure which properly belong to the several counties should be relegated to them respectively.

SINKING FUND.

There has been no change in the condition of the Sinking Fund since the last session of the General Assembly. The bonded debt of the State, as then, consists of a hundred and seventy-four six per cent. military bonds, amounting to $174,000.00, besides $6,394.00 in old railroad scrip, and bonds of 1835 and 1841, which have been so long overdue, and unheard of for so many years, that they are supposed to have been long since lost or destroyed, and will probably never be presented for redemption. The resources of the Sinking Fund are also substantially as at that time. Cash in the Treasury June 30, 1883, $174,002.30; four hundred and six shares of stock in the Bank of Louisville, quoted at the close of the last fiscal year at $31,262, and stock in turnpikes estimated at $500,000, amounting in all to $705,266.30.

THE PENITENTIARY,

I am glad to say, is in excellent condition. In fact, certain unfavorable circumstances considered, such as its unsuitable location, the defective plans of some of its buildings, and the inadequacy of its capacity to the number of convicts, for which, of course, the present management is in nowise responsible, it will compare favorably with any similar institution in the United States. The Commissioners have been careful and conscientious in the discharge of their duties; the officers have proven themselves to be faithful, efficient, and humane, careful alike of the interest of the State and the welfare of the prisoner, while the present contractors have at all times, and not infrequently at the sacrifice of their own pecuniary interest, cheerfully and cordially co-operated with the Commissioners and prison officials in their efforts to promote the comfort and improve the condition of the unfortunate class committed to their charge. The immediate consequence has been to secure and

maintain for the prison a superb sanitary condition, as well as a marked improvement in the morale of its inmates. The yard is kept in excellent order, free from all accumulations of rubbish or filth. The drainage has been made as complete as the topography of the location will permit, and a constant supply of clear running water so distributed as to promote the cleanliness and health of the prison, while contributing to the comfort and convenience of the prisoner. The cell-houses are properly warmed and ventilated, and the cells kept scrupulously neat and well supplied with clean and comfortable bedding. The hospital, under the auspices of a skillful and conscientious physician, is a model of neatness, quiet, and order, and the library well furnished with instructive and entertaining books. The convicts are bountifully fed, comfortably clothed, moderately worked, perform their allotted tasks with cheerfulness, and but rarely subject themselves to punishment by a breach of prison discipline. While the observance of religious exercises is compulsory upon none, they are afforded the amplest opportunities for religious instruction under the ministration of a Chaplain, who has devoted himself with singular zeal and earnestness to their physical welfare, as well as their moral culture; at the same time each is at perfect liberty to seek spiritual advice and comfort from ministers or others of his own denomination, for which every possible facility is cheerfully and promptly afforded.

It may be added, as a most gratifying evidence of the greatly improved condition of the prison in a sanitary point of view, that the average percentage of mortality within its walls, as shown by official statistics for six years, from 1874 to 1879, inclusive, was four and one half; never under three in any one year, four in one, five in another, and reaching in one as high as seven per cent.; while from May, 1880, to November, 1883, the average has only been one and three tenths, and never exceeding two and thirty-two one hundreths per cent. in any one year during the latter period.

Of course the conditions have been nothing like so favorable in many respects to those who have been employed outside the prison. They have been fed as well, clothed as comfortably, worked as moderately, and, as far as circumstances have rendered it possible, treated as humanely as those within the walls. It is said, indeed, that many prefer employment outside, as it has less the appearance of prison life perhaps, and by improving their time after the accomplishment of their weekly tasks, they are frequently able to earn considerable wages, which

they may transmit to their families or save until the expiration of their respective terms. But it is not to be expected, from the very nature of things, that they can be furnished with as comfortable quarters, and from that fact alone, as well as from the vicissitudes of the weather to which they are constantly exposed, and the numerous casualties incident to the occupations in which they are engaged, they must necessarily be subjected to a greater amount of disease and a higher rate of mortality than those who are kept within the prison walls. Hence it is not surprising that the statistics show the death rate among those who have been employed outside the walls from May, 1880, to November, 1883, to have been three and sixty-eight one hundredths as against one and three tenths per cent. on the inside, as I have already stated.

This fact is sufficient of itself to justify me in asking your serious and earnest attention to the immediate and urgent necessity of your taking steps to increase our Penitentiary accommodations as speedily as possible; for it is certainly not strictly consonant with the principles of even and exact justice, which is the birthright of every member of society, that, because one may have been condemned to penal servitude for a crime against the Commonwealth, however heinous or disgraceful, he should be compelled to incur extraordinary perils of life or limb not contemplated by the law.

There are, however, other and equally cogent reasons why this should be done. Not a single convict who has been sentenced to hard labor in the Penitentiary would be found at work upon a contract outside of its walls to-day but for the fact that there is not sufficient room inside for his proper accommodation or profitable employment. But this make-shift must necessarily be merely temporary. Whether it is just or unjust, legal or illegal, humane or inhumane, it will ultimately have to be abandoned, and that, perhaps, in the near future. The present contractors may or may not continue their contract after the first of next October at their option, and it is highly probable that there will be considerable diminution, if not a total suspension, of railroad construction in our State within the next two or three years, or a multitude of other contingencies may, within a year from this time, render it impossible to let out our convict labor for any purpose outside the prison walls. In that event, the question, what shall be done with the convicts who are thus employed at present, will prove a most grave and perplexing one.

With those already confined within the walls they number over a thousand, with the certainty of a constant increase year by year. To-

turn them back into a prison where the cell accommodations are only sufficient for seven hundred and forty-four, would be barbarous beyond expression. The spectacle of over a thousand human beings, comprising all ages and conditions of criminal life, from the beardless boy, convicted of some petty infraction of the penal code, to the hoary-headed, heartless villain, who plumes himself upon the commission of every crime that a diabolic ingenuity could conceive or a fiendish depravity execute, all pent up in quarters scarce sufficient for half their number, ill-fed, ill-clothed, reeking in filth, festering with disease, concocting conspiracies, encouraging each other in vices the most disgusting and destructive, and gloating in practices too brutal to mention, would be a blot upon our civilization too hideous to contemplate.

The only method, however, by which the State could be saved from such a disgusting stigma, unless adequate accommodations are provided for them, would be to reduce the number of convicts to the present capacity of the Penitentiary by a sweeping exercise of the pardoning power, which would be a calamity from the effects of which the public morals would not be able to recover for years; for there is nothing which more thoroughly destroys the efficacy of the penal laws than the expectation on the part of the criminal classes that they will escape punishment through the intervention of what is styled Executive clemency.

There is no alternative, therefore, but to increase our Penitentiary accommodations. It is a work which must be done sooner or later. The necessity for it is too obvious for further comment, and that necessity can neither be lessened nor obviated by delay. On the contrary, the longer it is postponed the greater the evil will become, and the more difficult will be the remedy. It will require the expenditure of a large amount of money, and take several years, perhaps, to accomplish it. Hence I will be pardoned for repeating the suggestion, that steps shall be taken to begin it at the earliest practicable moment.

I would further suggest, in this connection, that it would, in my judgment, be far better to erect a Branch Penitentiary, with a capacity of seven hundred or seven hundred and fifty cells, at some suitable point in the western portion of the State, than to attempt to enlarge the present one. The reasons for this, it seems to me, are so numerous and obvious that they scarcely need to be recapitulated.

In the first place, the location of our present prison is such that it could not be advantageously enlarged without the outlay of far more

money than would be required to build one upon a more eligible site; and then, to say nothing of the annual saving of expense to the Commonwealth in the transportation of convicts, which would be insured by the location of a new prison as suggested, experience has demonstrated that more than seven hundred or seven hundred and fifty prisoners in one place cannot be so easily or advantageously managed as a smaller number. The personal supervision of the prison official over the convict becomes less direct; consequently breaches of prison discipline become more frequent, and punishments are oftener inflicted; sullenness and insubordination among the prisoners are increased; work is more apt to be left undone or negligently performed; conspiracies and mutinies are more liable to occur, and sanitary regulations of all kinds much more difficult to enforce. Besides, if proper attention is paid to the selection of a suitable site, all the modern improvements can be made available much more easily and economically in building a new prison than in adding to an old one; and if proper care is taken in arranging the plans at the outset, suitable provision can be made for the classification of prisoners, and especially for the sequestration of juvenile offenders from the older and more abandoned criminals, whose vicious counsels and depraved examples usually countervail all efforts for the reformation of their younger and less obdurate associates.

CAPITOL BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

I would call your attention also, in this connection, to the condition of the Capitol, with that of its adjacent buildings and grounds, and suggest the propriety of your taking some timely action in relation thereto.

The main building, as you will probably find by experience, is extremely incommodious for the transaction of a great deal of the ordinary business of legislation, as it does not contain a single committee room, nor an apartment for the accommodation of the presiding officer of either branch of your honorable body. The eastern wing of the proposed extension is still incomplete, and the building occupying the site of the proposed western wing is in a very dilapidated condition, besides being extremely liable at any time to fire; while the grounds, for want of proper police surveillance, are the constant scene of almost every description of nuisance. If the present Capital is to remain our Seat of Government, it seems to me that a prudent economy, if no other consideration, would dictate the immediate inauguration of measures looking to the completion and preservation of our public buildings. If

it is to be removed, the sooner the question is settled the better, as procrastination in this, as in all other cases, so far from curing, only tends to aggravate the evil.

THE STATE GUARD.

The State Guard consists of three regiments of infantry, embracing one company of dismounted cavalry, one detached company of infantry, and two batteries of artillery, with an aggregate numerical strength in officers and men of one thousand and thirty-six, of whom, however, only about seven hundred can be relied upon as effective. These comprise, I am gratified to say, many of the brightest and most promising young men of the Commonwealth, and it is my determination that, as far as circumstances will allow, they shall be made as proficient as possible in everything pertaining to the duty and conduct of the thorough soldier. I wish them to realize clearly and fully the dignity of their position, as well as the importance of their responsibilities. I would have them to understand that they are not enlisted for the idle purposes of street pageantry, but as the active promoters and ultimate protectors of private peace and popular tranquility; that their organization is not maintained merely to give eclat to empty parades, but because "a well regulated militia is necessary to the security of a free State."

They will be put to no unnecessary inconvenience by reason of their enlistment, nor will they be taken from their business, or otherwise interfered with, by being called into active service, except in cases of extreme emergency, when the public safety may demand it; but if such an unfortunate necessity should arise, I wish them to know that the Commonwealth will expect to find them trained and efficient soldiers.

I sincerely trust, however, that such a deplorable contingency will seldom, if ever, occur; and I am satisfied that it might be obviated almost entirely if the peace officers throughout the State could be brought to understand that it is not only their right but their sworn duty to call to their assistance the entire power of the county if necessary to enforce the law or maintain the public peace, and that they should promptly arrest all persons who manifest an intention to engage in riotous conduct, or threaten in any manner the forcible obstruction of legal process, and have them imprisoned or placed under bonds for their good behavior or appearance before the proper tribunal for trial.

The Adjutant General's Office has been placed in a condition of thorough order and complete repair. The records and papers pertaining to the department have been assorted with the utmost care, and arranged

in the most admirable and convenient manner; while the military property of the State, not in the hands of organized companies, has been thoroughly overhauled, carefully inventoried, and put in the best condition possible under the circumstances.

I cannot quit this subject without asking your attention to the necessity of your making some provision for the preservation of the muster-rolls of the heroic body of volunteers who not only imperiled their lives in defense of their country, but achieved for our State such imperishable renown in the war of 1812. There are now on file in the office of the Adjutant General the rolls of thirteen regiments of those heroic and historic troops, which, from lapse of time and ill usage, have become so much worn and defaced that it is frequently difficult, and sometimes impossible, to decipher the names upon them even now; and to allow them to become totally lost, as must inevitably be the case, unless something shall be done to rescue them from destruction, would be an outrage upon the memory of our grand old veterans, and an everlasting disgrace to the State whose name was their rallying cry in battle, and whose glory the guerdon for which they fought. I would, therefore, repeat the suggestion made by Adjutant General Wright, in 1876, that some provision be made to have these rolls carefully transcribed into well bound books, so that they may be preserved for reference as historical records or other purposes, as circumstances may require.

STATE CHARITIES.

I have the honor to lay before you the reports of the Commissioners and Superintendents of the Eastern, Central, and Western Kentucky Lunatic Asylums, the Kentucky Institution for the Education and Training of Feeble-minded Children, the Kentucky Institution for the Education of the Blind, and the Kentucky Institution for the Education of Deaf Mutes, and would respectfully call your attention to the various suggestions and recommendations therein made.

The aggregate receipts and disbursements of the several Lunatic Asylums for the past year were as follows:

EASTERN ASYLUM, LEXINGTON.

Receipts from State Treasury	$111,900 01
From other sources	13,844 44
Total	$125,744 45
Disbursements	125,704 96
Balance	$39 49

CENTRAL ASYLUM, ANCHORAGE.

Receipts from State Treasury	$122,006 70
From other sources	18,455 66
Total	$140 462 36
Disbursements	121,902 47
Balance	$18,559 89

WESTERN ASYLUM, HOPKINSVILLE.

Receipts from State Treasury	$74,593 36
From other sources	15,214 94
Total	$89,808 30
Disbursements	85 059 93
Balance	$4,748 37

The whole number of patients treated during the year was 2,143, distributed as follows: in the Eastern Asylum, 795; in the Central Asylum, 727; and in the Western Asylum, 621. Of these, 406 were admitted during the year: to the Eastern Asylum, 176; to the Central Asylum, 174; and to the Western Asylum, 118. The whole number discharged as cured was 221, namely: from the Eastern Asylum, 61; from the Central Asylum, 105; and from the Western Asylum, 55. The percentage of cures upon the admissions during the year was as follows: in the Eastern Asylum, 34.09; in the Central Asylum, 60.03; and in the Western Asylum, 46.61.

At the Western Asylum several necessary buildings have been erected during the year, many valuable improvements made, additional machinery provided, comfortable furniture procured, extensive repairs completed, and the entire institution put in admirable condition. At Anchorage, also, a vast deal has been done to render the Asylum more nearly adequate to the purposes of such an establishment. Many additional improvements are, however, reported as still necessary to be made, and estimates of their cost submitted with the report of the Superintendent, to which your attention is respectfully called.

The Medical Superintendent of the Eastern Asylum reports that the entire buildings are greatly in need of painting, little or none having been done for the last five years; that a new tin roof is necessary; that

the present one has been patched until all attempts to prevent its leaking by further repairs of that character result in failure; that the heating apparatus should be thoroughly overhauled, and the pumps repaired or renewed. He estimates that it will require at least ten thousand dollars to make these indispensable repairs, and asks an appropriation of that sum for the purpose, which I would respectfully recommend. Before leaving this topic, I would respectfully call your attention to the remarks of Drs. Rodman and Chenault in relation to the policy of erecting cottages at our several Asylums for the accommodation of certain classes of the insane, which meet my hearty concurrence, and especially to the suggestions of the latter with regard to the propriety of limiting the number of persons to be charged with the transportation of patients to the Asylums. The evil he points out is certainly a most glaring and unnecessary one, and should be promptly remedied.

THE INSTITUTION FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND,

I am happy to say, is reported in excellent condition. The number of pupils taught last year was seventy-eight. The most careful attention was paid their physical welfare as well as to their mental culture. The hygienic condition of the institution was under constant supervision, and the result of such prudent vigilance was but little sickness, and not a single death during the year in the entire school. Under the tutelage of accomplished and conscientious instructors, the beneficiaries of this beautiful charity have made the most gratifying progress in every department of study, and manifested their appreciation of the beneficence of the Commonwealth "in a laudable desire to acquire all the forces that education can impart." I commend to your serious consideration the resolutions adopted by the Board of Visitors, and appended to their report.

INSTITUTION FOR THE EDUCATION OF DEAF MUTES.

The Board of Commissioners report a larger number of pupils in attendance from November 1st, 1881, to November 1st, 1883, than during any other similar period in the history of the school, and that the same corps of faithful officers and teachers has zealously and earnestly pursued the course indicated by long years of experience as best adapted to the development of the minds and characters of those committed to their care with the most gratifying results. They invoke attention, however, to the embarrassed condition of the finances of the

institution, attributable in part to extraordinary expenses incurred in necessary improvements, but mainly to the increased cost of instruction and sustenance consequent upon an increase of at least seventy-five per cent. in the average attendance upon the school within the past four years. They insist that if an annual appropriation of $6,000 was necessary for salaries and repairs when the average attendance of pupils was only eighty, it should be at least $10,000 with an average attendance of a hundred and forty, especially as their income has been diminished by a reduction of their permanent fund, and the expenses of heating, lighting, and insurance materially augmented by the increased size and value of their buildings. I therefore submit for your enlightened consideration their request for an additional annual appropriation of $3,000 for the purposes indicated, satisfied that if it should be found necessary to maintain the efficiency of an institution so long celebrated for its excellence it will not be withheld.

INSTITUTION FOR THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF FEEBLE-MINDED CHILDREN.

In laying before you the report of the Board of Commissioners of this institution, it affords me great pleasure to be able to bear testimony to the disinterested fidelity of each of its members, as well as to the zeal and efficiency of the excellent Superintendent, and other officers and employés of that admirable charity. The work they are accomplishing is as marvelous as it is beneficent, and should excite a thrill of generous pride in the bosom of every citizen of the Commonwealth. A conviction, from personal knowledge, of the necessities which demand the outlay of the several small sums asked for, impels me to recommend their appropriation.

I deem it my duty, in this connection, to direct your attention to the very remarkable state of facts disclosed by our official statistics with regard to the maintenance of the pauper idiots of the Commonwealth. It certainly reflects great credit upon the charitable disposition of our people that special provision should have been made by our Legislature for the care and sustenance of this unfortunate class of our fellow-beings in advance, perhaps, of any other State in the Union; but, like all other benefactions, it is liable to abuse, and it is not improbable that those who have had it in charge to see the bounty of the State in that regard properly administered have been frequently imposed upon. But, however that may be, it appears that of the thousand and forty-nine idiots

maintained last year by the Commonwealth, at a cost of $65,471, five hundred and fifty-four—over fifty-four per cent. of the whole number—were in four judicial circuits, leaving only four hundred and ninety-five to the other fourteen districts!

While the cause of this singular and startling difference in the apparent development of idiocy in different localities in the same Commonwealth may be a matter of curious speculation to the theoretical economists, it may be well for practical legislators to inquire whether it has resulted, to any extent, from the importation of such unfortunate beings with the view of having them pensioned upon the bounty of the State, or from some latent defect in the laws enacted for their benefit, or from a want of proper vigilance in their administration.

EDUCATION.

I have the honor, also, to lay before you the very able and exhaustive report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in which will be found not only a thorough and lucid exposition of the system and conditions of our Common Schools, but a clear and methodical presentation of such statistical data and other information in relation to that most important and interesting subject, which cannot fail to prove useful and instructive to you, or to the enlightened constituency you represent.

The school census, white and colored, and the corresponding apportionments out of the School Fund for the payment of teachers and commissioners, for the year ending June 30th, 1884, are as follows:

Whole number of white pupil children	500,824
Whole number of colored pupil children	92,470
Total	593,294
Apportioned to white children, $1.40 per capita	$701,153 60
Apportioned to colored children, $1.40 per capita	129,458 00
Total	$830,611 60
Amount apportioned to commissioners	42,089 11
Grand total	$872,089 71

It may not be uninteresting to note, in this connection, what has been done by the people of Kentucky for the education of the children of

the colored race within their midst. By the act of February 24, 1874, the whole of the taxes, together with all the fines and forfeitures collected by the State from its colored population, were devoted to the education of colored children, not a cent collected by either of those methods from a colored citizen being required towards paying the expenses of the State Government. From 1875 to 1882, inclusive, the *per capita* accruing to each colored pupil child from the fund thus raised varied from fifty to fifty-eight cents, settling in the latter year at fifty, with a deficit for that year of $1,917.22. On the 6th of August, 1882, the voters of the State, by a majority of nearly seventeen thousand, ratified the act of the Legislature equalizing the pupil age, as well as the *per capita* of the white and colored child, and the following year, ending June 30, 1883, the common *per capita* thus established was $1.30. Upon that ratio there was a deficit in the colored school fund —representing, as it did, the entire amount of taxes, fines, and forfeitures collected from the race by the Commonwealth—of $92,845.36, which had to be supplied by deducting a sufficient amount from the white school fund for that purpose. A similar deficit in that fund is likely to occur each succeeding year for years to come, and will, of course, have to be supplied in a similar manner. It becomes a question, therefore, for you to consider, whether the act of February 23, 1874, should not be repealed, and the colored citizen placed on an equality with the white with respect to the expenses of the government, as well as to the benefits of the Common School Fund.

The *per capita* last year, as already stated, was $1.30, showing an increase of ten cents only for the present year ending June 30, 1884. We may deprecate the evils of illiteracy, and descant upon the blessings of popular education as much as we will, but we will indulge the Utopian dream of a Golden Age, when every child in the State shall enjoy the benefits of good schools at the public expense, a long time before it is realized with the meager pittance of $1.40 per annum to the pupil, unless something shall be done to supplement it. This cannot be expected from State taxation, and our people had as well understand it first as last, for, with perhaps three or four exceptions, there is not another State in the Union which contributes so large a portion of its general revenues to purposes of education. The system may, however, be rendered more effective even with our limited funds, and to that end, the committee appointed by the Senate under a resolution of April 21, 1882, has prepared a bill, which accompanies the admirable report of

the Superintendent, and will be presented for your consideration in due order.

THE STATE COLLEGE

is reported to be in a prosperous condition. During the session of 1881-'2 the number of matriculates was three hundred and twenty, and in that of 1882-'3 three hundred and sixteen. The matriculation for the current year has not been completed, and will not be, perhaps, until about the beginning of the second term; but it will probably be as large as usual. Instruction is given under twelve competent professors and two assistant professors, in the departments of English Language, Mathematics, Physics, Elementary Chemistry, Practical Chemistry, Agricultural Chemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Agricultural and Veterinary Science, Botany, Zoölogy, Geology, Mineralogy, Ancient and Modern Languages, History, Military Tactics, Mental and Moral Philosophy, Practical Mechanics, and the Theory and Practice of Teaching.

The moral tone of the institution is represented as healthy, the classes well attended, and a commendable degree of emulation manifested among the students. It is impossible, however, to realize the idea embodied in the act of Congress under which this school was established without a farm suitable for experimental agriculture, where the theoretical instruction of the class-room may be demonstrated in practice. It is hoped that this may be accomplished at no very distant day, and that the State College may become more and more an ornament to the Commonwealth and a blessing to its people.

RAILROAD COMMISSIONERS.

I have also the pleasure of submitting for your consideration the very elaborate report of the Board of Railroad Commissioners, which has been prepared with unusual care and ability, and presents a volume of information which will doubtless prove as useful to the practical legislator as it will be entertaining and instructive to the general reader.

They report that on the first day of December, 1883, there were in operation in the State 1,936.99 miles of railway, which, however, do not penetrate one third of the counties in the Commonwealth, being about one mile of road to each twenty-one square miles of our territory. It is encouraging to note, however, that several roads are in process of construction, while others have been projected for the near future, though there will evidently be a considerable diminution in the number of miles to be built during the ensuing year, the Louisville and

Nashville and Chesapeake and Ohio Companies having already signified their determination not to undertake the extension of their respective lines within that time.

The Owensboro and Nashville will soon be completed to Adairville, which will probably be its southern terminus for some years to come. The Kentucky Central is pushing its extension to Livingston, and will soon have it open for use. The Short Route in Louisville is also being pushed, and when completed will add greatly to the convenience and comfort of those passing through that city by rail. Work is being done on the line from Newport to the Big Sandy, and the Kentucky Union is opening a route from the Elizabethtown, Lexington and Big Sandy to the rich coal, iron, and timber region of Eastern Kentucky. The Henderson Bridge is in course of construction, but will not be completed before the spring of 1885. The Breckinridge Coal Road is almost completed, and will be ready for business in a few months. The line of the Narrow-gauge from Clarksville, Tennessee, to Princeton, in this State, is being located, and several miles have already been graded. These, with other projected lines, will materially increase our railroad mileage, perhaps in the near future.

It appears from the report that the business of the various railroads in the State is increasing, and their general condition improving. Steel rails are being substituted for iron, and many facilities for travel and traffic furnished which have not existed heretofore. The Chesapeake and Ohio and Southwestern has reduced its local passenger fares to three cents per mile, making that the uniform rate with all the principal lines throughout the State. These, with other circumstances, have, no doubt, been conducive to the establishment of a better state of feeling between the people and those in charge of the management of the several roads, which is represented at present as being exceptionally pleasant and cordial.

It cannot be denied, however, that there is still more or less dissatisfaction with regard to local freight tariffs in some localities, and no doubt very justly so. At points thought to be admirably located for the manufacture of furniture, wagons, and agricultural implements of various kinds, capitalists who desired to embark in such enterprises have declined to do so from the fear that, after having made their plant, they would find themselves unable to compete with similar establishments in other localities on account of the excessive freight charges to which they might be subjected, both on their raw material and their

manufactured products. That such an obstacle to the material development of any portion of the Commonwealth should exist, if it can be reasonably and justly obviated, is greatly to be deplored, and as far as it can be done by legislative action without an infringement of private rights, it should be removed. I am gratified, therefore, that while the Commissioners have very properly declined to recommend an attempt to establish any Procrustean tariff of freights by the Legislature, and think that it is not even advisable at this time to confer upon them the power to regulate rates, as has been done in some States, they nevertheless recommend such legislation as will prevent greater charges for shorter hauls, and seem to consider the question of "local rates" the one of paramount importance to the commercial interests of Kentucky at this time.

I am glad to find, also, that the Commissioners urge a commendable prudence in legislating in relation to railroads. They are among the grandest social and political forces of the age. They are indispensable to the proper development of the vast and varied resources of our State; and nothing should be unnecessarily or wantonly done to impede their construction. Yet equal, if not greater, care should be taken that, in our efforts for the encouragement of such enterprises, we do not sacrifice the interests of the people, nor detract from the sovereign power of the State. The citizen and the corporation are equally entitled to justice. Their rights are equally sacred in the eye of the law, and if we should be cautious not to jeopardize the creation or the business of the one, we should be equally cautious not to jeopardize the rights or the interests of the other.

The Commissioners, it will be observed, recommend an addition to their present powers and duties, in a variety of particulars unnecessary to be recapitulated here, and while I may not be prepared to concur in all their suggestions, I am clearly of the opinion that much of the authority asked for by them should be deposited somewhere, and it would, no doubt, be exercised by them as efficiently and as faithfully as by any other tribunal; but if it shall be found that the jurisdiction of the Commission cannot be judiciously enlarged, it becomes a question worthy of your consideration whether it would not be better to abandon it altogether, and devolve its present duties upon some other officer or officers of the State government—not because the Commissioners are not honest, capable, or faithful, but as a matter of economy to the Commonwealth.

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